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| Annual Secondary School Immunisation Program  |
| Important information for Victorian secondary schools 2021 |

## Protecting students against vaccine-preventable diseases

The Victorian Secondary School Immunisation Program offers free vaccines to Year 7 and Year 10 students. Students will have the opportunity to receive the following:

#### Year 7 students

* Diphtheria-tetanus-whooping cough (pertussis) vaccine - one injection
* Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine - two injections spaced by a minimum of six months apart

#### Year 10 students

* Meningococcal A, C, W, Y vaccine – one injection

## Catch-up vaccination for students who missed out in 2020

Some students at some schools will need to complete their 2020 vaccine program in 2021. This is because flexible and remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic response delayed or prevented the delivery of some vaccines – usually delivered on school grounds – at the intended times. This is particularly the case for the second dose of HPV vaccine, which must be delivered a minimum of six months after the first dose. If this is the case for your school, your local council immunisation service will let you know and work with you to deliver any remaining vaccines due to students. Consent provided by parents for the 2020 vaccine program remains valid, so no extra forms are required.

## What do schools need to do?

There are two key steps for schools to action at the commencement of the school year:

1. **Send collection statements** to parents/guardians of Year 7 and Year 10 students that informs them that their contact details will be transferred to local council unless they request otherwise.
2. **Transfer parent/guardian/student contact details data to local council**.

Resourcesto guide you through the process are available at <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-adolescents/secondary-school> This includes a data extraction tool to make the transfer of data simple, quick and secure.

1. If the local council informs you that COVID-19 related catch-up of vaccines from the 2020 vaccine program are required for some students (now in Year 8 or Year 11) these **parents/guardians will need to be informed about the catch-up vaccine program**.

## Key dates annually for schools

* **Week of 28 January –** distribute a *Collection Statement* to parents/guardians of all students in Years 7 and Year 10.
* **February –** record any objections from parents/guardians whom do not wish for their contact details to be provided to local council.
* **28 February –** transfer contact details to local council as soon as possible after census date, edited as per parent/guardian requests. *If students’ data is confirmed prior to the census date* it may be sent to councils earlier in order to assist the preparation for upcoming immunisation sessions.

## What information goes to local council?

Schools provide the following basic information to local council:

* Student name, gender, date of birth, Year level, class, language(s) spoken at home
* Parent/guardian names, phone numbers, email and postal addresses

The *Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019* authorise schools to provide this student and parent information to local council for the purposes of delivering the Victorian Secondary School Immunisation Program.

## Why do schools provide this information?

* To improve communication with parents/guardians regarding their child’s vaccination needs
* To reduce the administrative burden on school staff to follow-up consent forms
* To ensure all eligible students are offered the opportunity to access free vaccinations at school.
* To reduce the time required by councils to manually enter data obtained from returned consent forms into their vaccination database system.

## Further information for schools

The Department of Health and Human Services immunisation website provides a range of [excellent resources for secondary schools](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-adolescents/secondary-school) to help with delivery of the secondary school immunisation program:

* **Agreement for local council and secondary school**: The purpose of this agreement is to set shared expectations and acknowledge the roles and responsibilities between schools and local councils to deliver the Secondary School Immunisation Program. (7 pages)
* **Collection statement regarding student contact details**: An example letter from school principals to parents/guardians of Year 7 and Year 10 students to let them know that their contact information is shared with the relevant local council for the purposes of delivering the secondary school immunisation program unless they request otherwise. (two pages)
* **School newsletter article about the secondary school immunisation program**: An example article from inclusion in school newsletters or communiques to alert parents/guardians of Year 7 and Year 10 students to the secondary school immunisation program. (one page)
* **Secondary school immunisation program guide for schools**: A comprehensive step-by-step guide for school immunisation coordinators and other school staff who are involved in delivering the secondary school immunisation program. (12 pages)
* **Letter example to parents of Year 8 students/Year 11 students who completing the 2020 immunisation program in 2021:** example text that school administration or local council immunisation services can use to inform parents/guardians about the planned vaccination days to complete the 2020 program, delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic. (two two-page letters)
* **School software instructions for sharing information with councils**: Instructions on using common school software programs to extract relevant student contact information to provide to local council for the purposes of delivering the secondary school immunisation program, a data exporter and an excel template for data compilation. (10 documents)

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